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**U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick  
in Europe, December 17-19**

*Zoellick to meet Russian Economic Minister Gref in Paris, Commissioner Lamy  
and other EU Officials in Brussels*

WASHINGTON - U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick will be in Europe today for three days of meetings with officials from Russia and the European Union. Zoellick will meet with Russian Minister of Economic Trade and Development German Gref in Paris on December 17 and European Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy and other senior EU officials in Brussels on December 18-19.

"I look forward to productive meetings in Europe with my Russian and European counterparts," said Ambassador Zoellick. "It is an excellent opportunity to take stock of the past year, including the successful Doha ministerial, and to look ahead to what can be accomplished in 2002."

"Our economic relationship with Russia has developed rapidly in recent months, and Minister Gref and I will explore concrete ways in which to capitalize on this positive momentum, especially by advancing Russia's accession to the WTO," added Zoellick. "Russia's WTO Working Party has just concluded a series of productive informal meetings in Geneva, and members have agreed to pursue a vigorous negotiating timetable in the first part of next year. President Putin has made Russia's WTO accession and continuing integration into the global trading system a priority."

Zoellick noted, "The new dynamic of U.S.-Russian economic interaction has invigorated all aspects of our relationship, as we seek to support Russia's continued integration in the global trading system, successful domestic economic reform, and the promotion of a stable and transparent investment climate."

In addition to meeting with Commissioner Lamy, Ambassador Zoellick will meet with Franz Fischler, European Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries; David Byrne, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection; Margot Wallstrom, European Commissioner for

the Environment; and members of the European Parliament.

The United States and the European Union share the largest two-way trade and investment relationship in the world. Over the past year, U.S.-E.U. cooperation on trade has increased markedly, resulting in agreement to resolve the longstanding dispute over bananas and other differences, close cooperation on the entry of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan into the WTO, and a successful coordination of positions leading up to the launch of the WTO Doha Development Agenda in November.

Zoellick's meeting with Gref continues the Administration's high level economic dialogue with Russia. Trade in goods between the United States and Russia totaled more than \$10 billion last year. With the accession of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan to the WTO, Russia will be the largest economy yet to join the organization.

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